

HR CONNECTIONS

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Department of Human Resources



Welcome to the April 2010 edition of HR Connections. After a record snowfall for the month of February in Columbus and Central Ohio, even a glimpse of the sun and temperatures approaching 50 degrees are a welcome sign of the near arrival of spring. During this time of the year we also celebrate "March Madness" and the success of our favorite teams in the NCAA tournament.

Far more importantly, on March 11, 2010 the King Arts Complex was the setting for the City's most essential celebration; the Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony, where we celebrate the many accomplishments of our employees. The ceremony enabled the Mayor and City Leadership to recognize and reward our employees' innovation and ingenuity; their extraordinary customer service; their attention to workplace safety; support of the Mayors "Green Initiative" and their many years of dedicated service to the City. Kudos to all who played a part in the planning and execution of this event.

Please place May 12, 2010 on your calendars as a reminder to participate in the Spring Health and Benefits Fair to be held at 750 Piedmont Road from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. You owe it to yourself and your overall good health to take advantage of the many free health screenings and other health and benefits related information available at this event.

Chester C. Christie,
Director, Human Resources



Mayor Michael B. Coleman

March 25, 2010

WHAT'S INSIDE

2010 Employee
Recognition Program

Personal Problems?

Credit Card Rules

Flu Season Update

Green Workout Ideas

2010 Black History
Month Celebration

Cut Gardening Costs

Consider This

"The best preparation for tomorrow is the right use of today"

SAVE THE DATE!

2010 Health & Benefits Fair

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

750 Piedmont Rd (Citywide Training Center)

Don't Horse Around with your Health

Glucose Screening, Nutrition/Healthy Eating, Blood Pressure Screening, Smoking Cessation, Massage, Reflexology, Sexual Health, Health and Community Resources, Body Comp/BMI and others. The Health and Benefits Fair will have many local service providers, banks, universities and health clubs.

We hope to see you there!

2010 Employee Recognition Program Ceremony

The 2010 Employee Recognition and Awards ceremony took place on March 11th. Angela Pace, Director of Community Affairs for WBNS 10TV served as Mistress of Ceremonies. Mayor Coleman, the City Auditor, City Attorney, Chief of Staff, Clerk of Courts and the Mayor's Cabinet honored and recognized the accomplishments of City employees who have dedicated their careers to providing excellent public service.

GET GREEN: Individuals were recognized for contributing to the success of Mayor Coleman's Get Green Columbus initiative. City employees have been acknowledged for initiatives such as recycling efforts, making Fleet greener by advocating for alternative fuels, building projects that exceed construction standards, the creation of a map that encourages bicycle usage and the awarding of a grant to demonstrate how to make homes healthier and safer for families that have children with asthma.

SAVINGS SUGGESTION: Individuals were recognized and rewarded for offering ideas that led to saving dollars, increasing safety and job efficiency, and overall innovative improvement in the work environment. This year's Savings Suggestion winners have saved the City \$2,611,229.45. These employees or teams of employees received monetary rewards that ranged from the minimum of \$100 to the maximum of \$7,000.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY : The Safety Incentive Program is designed to recognize and reward employees who strive to ensure a safe work environment. The 2010 Award recipients include Keith May, Finance and Management, Construction Management for consistently carrying the highest number of projects in construction management, completing several million dollars worth of renovation and new construction without a single lost work or otherwise reportable injury; Department of Public Utilities Power Distribution Group employees had the lowest OSHA incident rate for Department of Public Utilities field related work groups; entire Department of Public Service for reducing their recordable injuries by 29%, decreasing their lost workdays by 25% and reducing their lost workday injuries by 52% to name a few accomplishments; Dublin Road Water Plant performed all of their job duties during the entire year of 2009 while maintaining a record zero OSHA recordable injuries and 60,092 work hours with an incident rate of zero.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Individuals earned the designation of a Certified Citywide Trainer or completed career development training to enhance job market skills.

CHARITABLE CAMPAIGN COORDINATORS: The 2009 Combined Charitable Campaign coordinators were honored for their tireless efforts in coordinating the campaign in their departments and divisions. For decades, City of Columbus employees have participated in charitable campaigns, donating over a million dollars for those in the community and abroad.

YEARS OF SERVICE: Employees with 40, 35, 30, 25 and 20 years were recognized for their dedicated service.

MAYOR'S AWARD OF EXCELLENCE: These prestigious awards recognize outstanding individuals or groups of individuals within Columbus city government for their life saving/humanitarian efforts, their outstanding job performance, their community service and/or outstanding service delivery. The 2010 Award recipients include John Grembowski and David Nelapa for their heroic effort in assisting a gentleman who had been robbed; Eric Hopkins and James Stewart for helping a middle school student who had flagged them down after being bullied on his way to school; Lt. Gary Hamilton for helping Southerly Waste Water Treatment Plant emergency response team get back into "response readiness" for potential workplace emergencies; Michael Plumb for serving as a Goodwill Ambassador for visitors to City Hall as he and his staff provide a safe and secure environment; Helen Carte-Jordan for her community service commitment to the beautification of downtown by planting flowers along North Front Street at the West Gay Street entrance; Columbus Public Health, Food Protection Team for receiving the Crumbine Award which recognizes the importance of food protection at the local level; Patricia Dietsch for coordinating the H1N1 vaccine administration for Columbus Public Health; Stacy Woodburn for changing the way Fleet Management purchases refuse truck break calipers; Michele Addison for helping to increase the subrogated dollars in Fleet Management by 54% since 2007; Jefferson Duffield for educating users of public safety radios about different options available to communicate as well as implementing a successful practice exercise that allowed the radio users to experience what is needed during a system outage; Brad Dixon for proposing that City employees utilize a system that the City currently has for sending out surveys; 5th Avenue Retaining Wall Team for an emergency repair that saved the City dollars and time in the summer of 2009.

Who Needs Personal Problems?

Let's see:

- The economy is in close-to-crisis mode
- The threat of global warming is in the paper almost every day
- Various diseases seem ever ready to break loose
- The Terrorism Alert Level rarely drops below "elevated"
- Healthcare costs rise each year

And on it goes.....

So we'd all still have plenty to worry about even if everything in our personal lives was perfect. But few of us are there. And if we have issues similar to the ones listed below going on, life can get overly challenging in a hurry, and it can become hard to function effectively. Personal problems might include:

- Financial worries
- Caring for elderly parents
- Marital conflict
- Teenagers
- Conflict at work
- Health problems

So if it all starts to feel like too much, don't forget your Employee Assistance Program is here to help. Call 645-6894 to talk to someone who cares.



Some of the New Credit Card Rules

More time to pay Companies are required to send billing statements at least 21 days before the payment is due as well as making your due date the same day of the month.

Advance notice of rate hikes Companies must alert consumers 45 days in advance before they can increase their interest rates, change fees applying to the account, or make significant changes to the terms of the card.

No more retroactive rate increases If your interest rate does increase, it will only apply to charges made after the change. Any time you pay more than your monthly minimum, the excess will go towards paying off the balance with the highest interest rate.

Balance awareness Bills now include easy to understand information on how long it will take to pay your balance if you only make the minimum payments. It also breaks down how much you would need to pay each month to pay off the balance in three years.

Real overdraft protection Card holders are automatically opted-out of overdraft protection. Rather than force customers to allow the bank to charge them for accidental overages, the bank must get their approval. Customers that choose to stay opted-out may have their card declined if they try to make a purchase that exceeds its limit, but they will not have to worry about being charged a fee.

2009-2010 Flu Season Update

Influenza-like activity is currently below the national baseline level for seasonal flu and has been for the past few weeks. Nearly all of the flu viruses circulating right now are the H1N1 pandemic flu strain. In a typical flu season, illness comes and goes in waves, normally running from October through May and peaking in February or early March.

While H1N1 illnesses have been on the decline in recent weeks, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warn that the potential for widespread flu is still there. Past pandemics, such as the ones in 1918 and 1956-1957, have occurred in three waves, and experts warn that if the H1N1 pandemic follows historical trends, a third, more serious wave could still occur.

“When you are faced with a pandemic, you do not get a second chance to get it right. You come on strong, and scale back as necessary,” explains Dr. Teresa Long, Columbus Health Commissioner. Dr. Long says it is critical to reinforce the message that vaccination is our best protection against flu because demand for vaccine usually drops at this time of year.

“Influenza is unpredictable, but we know if more people are vaccinated, the disease is less likely to spread and lowering our risk of a third wave of illness,” says Dr. Long. Public health officials are monitoring closely for changes in illness, and continuing to make vaccine widely available.

H1N1 Vaccination for City of Columbus Employees

Occupational Health - Call 645-3278 for information on this walk-in clinic (no cost).

Franklin County Board of Health - Appointments can be made online at columbuspandemicflu.org or by calling 462-7463 (no cost).

Columbus Public Health Immunization Clinic (no cost) - Check hours at www.publichealth.columbus.gov
Check with your health care provider or local pharmacy (a fee may be charged).

Don't forget these other important basics to stop the flu:

Wash your hands often and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60% or greater alcohol)

Stay home from work or school if you are sick (24 hours after being fever-free)

Cover your cough with your arm or tissue (not your hands)

Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth

Avoid close contact with people who are sick

Cleaning Surfaces

Flu viruses can be spread by touching surfaces (like a desk, doorknob) or an object (like a keyboard or pen) and then touching your nose, eyes or mouth. Studies have shown that flu virus can survive on surfaces from 2 to 8 hours, but it is fragile and easy to kill. More frequent cleaning and disinfecting using the proper solutions can reduce the threat of spreading flu this way.

- Disinfect surfaces and items touched by different people – like doorknobs, faucets, and telephones. Also disinfect areas touched by someone who is ill – like bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, kitchen counters and toys for children.
- Wipe with a household disinfectant, following the directions on the product label. Additional disinfection of these surfaces beyond routine cleaning is not needed.
- Linens, eating utensils and dishes belonging to those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but should not be shared without washing thoroughly first.

More Flu Information

Contact your healthcare provider, visit www.ColumbusPandemicFlu.org, www.flu.gov, or call 2-1-1 (221-2255).

Green Workout Ideas



- **Stay home** Working out at home is easy and convenient. Plenty of routines require nothing more than a mat and some room to lunge or squat.
- **Get outside** Why waste the energy required to run a treadmill or stationary bike? Hit your local hiking trails, take your two-wheeler out for a spin, or just add a daily walk to your lunch hour.
- **Use the gym wisely** Don't use two towels when one (or zero) will do, bring a reusable water bottle and set the treadmill to a higher incline so it uses less energy.
- **Get energized** Fuel your body with fresh, organic food and skip the processed aisles at the store. Go for organic energy bars that don't include ingredients like sugar or artificial colors and flavors, and that are made from fruits, nuts, fiber, protein and natural (not trans) fats.
- **Gear up green** If you are going to work out, there may be gear that you need but you do not have to buy all new products. Check the web, a sporting goods store or your friends for deals on used bikes, weights and other equipment. You may be surprised at how good your workout can be with two water-filled jugs, a dining room chair and an old crate.
- **Capture your energy** Don't let all your hard work on the stationary bike go to waste; hook it up to a generator or battery and save it to power household appliances from iPods to televisions and laptops. These kits are simple to install and give you an extra motivational push to make sure you don't skip your daily workout.
- **Change your routine** Finding the time to fit in a dedicated exercise session every day isn't always easy, but replacing sedentary parts of your daily life with activity lets you cross both to-dos off your list at once. Try walking or riding your bike to work or walking to the supermarket or post office and you'll save gas while getting a workout.

Visit www.planetgreen.discovery.com for more information

2010 BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION



Neither rain, sleet nor a Level I Snow emergency kept a substantial crowd from coming out to the Lincoln Theater, as it was outfitted and staged to be the venue of the historical Harlem Cotton Club of the 20's and 30's. A 12 foot "Cotton Club" sign hung mid-stage and under it faux patrons of the replicated nightclub, where world-class talent such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Nat King Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong and others performed, were entertained by outstanding modern-day singers and dancers. They included New York-based dancers and crooners, Ty Stephens and Ted Louis and local vocalist, Jeanette Williams. The Columbus Jazz Arts Group Sextet provided musical accompaniment. One "priceless" highlight of the program was the on stage serenading of Mayor Coleman by Ms. Williams. Quite a performance! Quite a celebration!



Cut Costs Corner

Save money on gardening

- **Select the right plants** Every plant has specific soil, climate, sun and water needs. Stick to plants that are well-adapted to the area and the conditions of your yard to cut your outdoor water bill in half. Garden centers can point you to native and drought resistant varieties.
- **Embrace mulch** Mulch and compost retain moisture and allow you to wait longer between waterings. Both also result in healthier soil, which promotes deeper roots and gives plants access to water deeper in the soil. Have you ever heard of Com-Til? Com-Til is made out of biosolids from the City's Waste Water Treatment Plants, yard waste and wood chips at the Compost Facility, 7000 Jackson Pike. Com-Til improves soil and energizes plants. It is value priced and can be purchased at the Compost Facility Monday-Friday between 7a-3p, all year long. Call 645-3153 for more information.
- **Water the plants timely** The best time is early morning or evenings. Avoid afternoons as temperature at that time is high and tends to evaporate most of the water. Late evening and night time is also not suitable because moisture accumulates, causing fungus and mold.
- **Mow sparingly** Grass that's too short will struggle to grow and require more water. Never chop off more than a third of its height at a time and keep it at least three inches tall. Also, leave the grass clippings on your lawn rather than bagging them. This technique meets up to 1/3 of your lawn's nitrogen requirement while shading the soil and keeping it cool.
- **Collect rainwater** Use a rainwater harvesting system that filters rain from roof gutters into a large tank to save approximately 1,300 gallons of water that is used in gardens during the hot summer months. Just as effective: Put a rain barrel or other container outside to collect a few gallons - enough to round the flower beds with a watering can.
- **Don't invest in lots of equipment** Most gardening can be done with a few tools; a lawnmower, shovel, pruner and hoe. Borrow tools from a friendly neighbor or Rebuilding Together Central Ohio by calling 258-6392. Rent them for the day, buy them second hand or check the clearance section at the hardware store for deals.

The REACH Show

Live 4th Thursday of every month at 7:00 pm. Tune in and watch CTDCE explore fun and fundamental topics.

March - Diversity

April - Mental Health

May - Safety

These programs are re-aired Tuesdays at 9am, Wednesdays at 10pm, Thursdays at 7pm and Saturdays at 3pm

The City of Columbus Toastmasters Club



meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month and also on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at the Training Center,

750 Piedmont Road.

Come have fun and make new friends while developing your leadership, communication and networking skills.

For more information, contact CTDCE at 645-8065.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

United HealthCare (Medical).....	1-800-681-3849
Claims, Pharmacy/UHC Mail Order (MEDCO), Pre-certification Optum/Nurseline.....	1-877-365-7922
United Behavioral Health.....	1-800-358-0365
Behavioral health, substance abuse, psychiatric treatments Website.....	www.myuhc.com
Delta (Dental).....	1-800-524-0149
Website.....	www.deltadentaloh.com
Vision Service Plan (Vision).....	1-800-877-7195
Website.....	www.vsp.com
United HealthCare (COBRA):	1-800-318-5311
Hartford: Short-Term Disability.....	1-800-752-9713
Claim Questions.....	1-866-282-8495
Filing a Claim: Contact Division of Human Resources, Risk Management at 645-8065 or Payroll	
AFLAC.....	1-800-992-3522

HR CONNECTIONS

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